

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

1           1.       (Currently amended) A nonwoven fabric comprising at least two separate  
2 but interconnected layers, said fabric comprising hydroentangled and consolidated fibers in each  
3 of the layers as well as discrete interconnections so as to provide discrete voids between the two  
4 layers of fabric, said fabric having a permeability sufficient to enable storage of fluids within the  
5 voids.

1           2.       (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 1  
2 characterized in that the voids comprise a channel within the structure of the fabric.

1           3.       (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 1  
2 characterized in that the voids comprise a plurality of channels.

1           4.       (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 2  
2 characterized in that the channels have a substantially cylindrical or tubular shape.

1           5.       (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 1  
2 characterized in that the voids are arranged in a substantially uniform or periodic manner.

1           6.       (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 1  
2 characterized in that the thickness of the nonwoven fabric is from 1 mm to 9 mm.

1           7.       (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 1  
2 characterized in that the area density of the nonwoven fabric is from 40 to 300 g/m<sup>2</sup>.

1           8.       (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 1,  
2 wherein the voids comprise discrete channels within the body of the fabric.

1           9.       (Canceled)

1           10.      (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 2  
2 characterized in that the width of the channels are in the range from 0.2 mm to 8.5 mm.

1           11.      (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 1,  
2 wherein said voids further comprise one or more functional materials.

1                   **12.**     (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 11  
2 characterized in that the functional material is a member selected from a yarn, filament, wire,  
3 wax, gel, liquid, pulp and particle.

1                   **13.**     (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 1,  
2 wherein the separate but interconnected layers are formed from a member selected from carded,  
3 air-laid, wet-laid, spun-laid and meltblown webs and combinations thereof.

1                   **14.**     (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 1,  
2 wherein the layers are fibrous, and wherein at least two fibrous layers are made of different fiber  
3 types.

1                   **15.**     (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 14,  
2 wherein at least one fibrous layer is hydrophobic and at least one fibrous layer is hydrophilic.

1                   **16.**     (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 12,  
2 wherein the functional material is a member selected from a yarn and a filament and said yarns  
3 and filaments are made of a member selected from natural, man-made and mineral fibres.

1                   **17.**     (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 12,  
2 wherein the functional material is a liquid and said liquid is a member selected from cleaning  
3 liquids, detergent liquids, paints, perfumes, cosmetics, lotions, ointments, antioxidants, liquid  
4 nutrients and creams.

1                   **18.**     (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 12,  
2 wherein the functional material is a powder and said powder is a member selected from  
3 superabsorbents, cleaning agents and medicaments.

1                   **19.**     (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 12,  
2 wherein the functional material is a particle and said particle is a member selected from a silica  
3 gel, activated carbon particles, metallic particles, ceramic particles, polymer particles, phase  
4 change material (PCM) particles and seed particles.

1                   **20.**     (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim **12**,  
2 wherein the functional material is a wire and said wire is a member selected from electrically  
3 conductive wires, shape memory alloy (SMA) wire and optical wires.

1                   **21.**     (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim **12**,  
2 wherein the functional material is a gel and said gel is a member selected from hydrogels,  
3 medicinal gels and hygienic cleaning gels.

1                   **22-32.** (Canceled)

1                   **33.**     (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim **1**  
2 characterized in that the nonwoven fabric is suitable for the controlled release of one or more  
3 medicaments.

1                   **34.**     (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim **1**  
2 characterized in that the nonwoven fabric is suitable for containing or delivering one or more  
3 cleaning fluids.

1                   **35.**     (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim **1**  
2 characterized in that the nonwoven fabric is in the form of an absorbent article.

1                   **36.**     (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim **35**,  
2 wherein the absorbent article is a member selected from a wipe, a wound dressing, a baby diaper  
3 component, an incontinence pad, and a feminine hygiene absorbent pad.

1                   **37-40.** (Canceled)

1                   **41.**     (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim **1**, wherein  
2 the nonwoven fabric is suitable for light-weight thermal insulation.

1                   **42.**     (Previously presented) The use of the nonwoven fabric according to claim  
2 **1** in the manufacture of an article.

1                   **43.**     (Previously presented) The use according to claim **42** wherein the article is  
2 a member selected from a medicament delivery device, a cleaning fluids delivery device, an

3 absorbent article, a wipe, a wound dressing, a baby diaper component, an incontinence pad, a  
4 feminine hygiene absorbent pad and a thermal insulation material.

1                   **44.**     (Previously presented) A method of delivering a functional material  
2 which comprises the use of the nonwoven fabric according to claim 1.

1                   **45.**     (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 1 wherein  
2 the voids are coated with a vapour permeable PU polymer.

1                   **46.**     (New) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 1, wherein each of said  
2 voids is defined by the layers and said interconnections.

1                   **47.**     (New) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 46, wherein said layers  
2 are configured to enable delivery of said fluid.

1                   **48.**     (New) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 1, wherein said fabric has  
2 differential permeability.